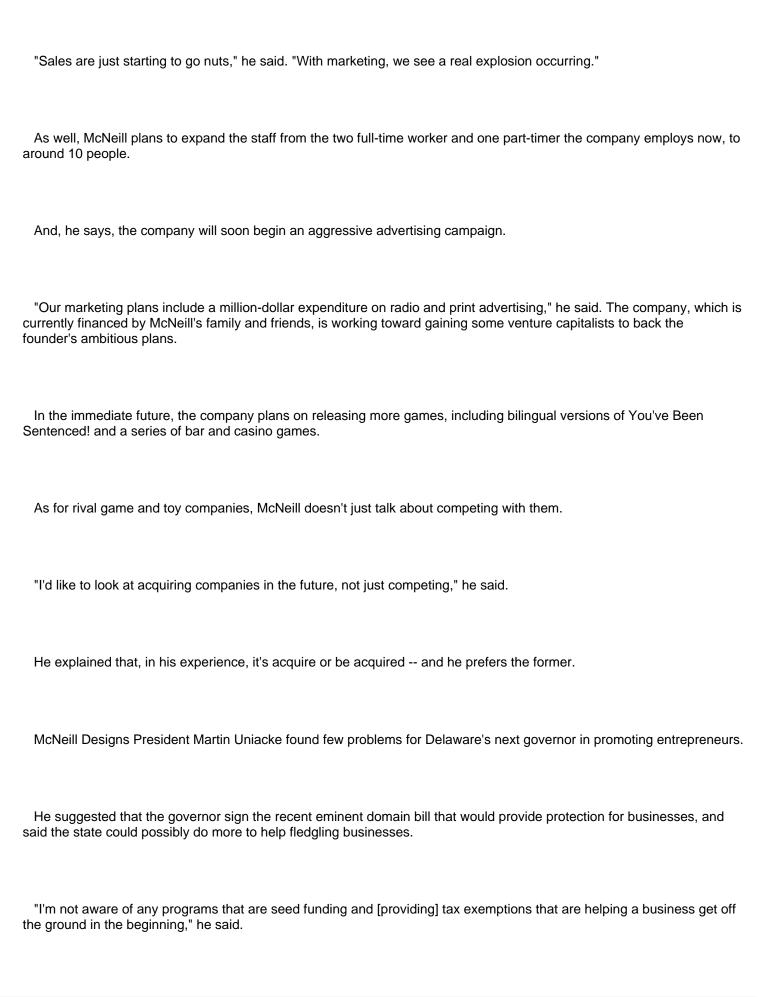
Game designer sees a place to grow (The News Journal) McNeill Designs aims to become major player By ALEX GUILLÉN The News Journal July 20, 2008 It's a bit of a cliché, but Delaware native Don McNeill really did have his great idea in the shower. "There's plenty of word games out there, but there's never been a good sentence game," he said. After that realization, he jumped out of the shower and woke up his wife to explain the idea for a new board game that focuses on building sentences. His idea is called "You've Been Sentenced!" and since he founded McNeill Designs for Brighter Minds LLC three years ago, the game has grown in popularity and is now sold across the country and internationally, including in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. "What began as an idea for a game has grown into this company with eight award-winning products," he said. "It's just been a phenomenal ride." By all accounts, the Wilmington-based company is a Delaware success story. Besides the original You've Been Sentenced!, McNeill Designs also offers expansion packs, a reworked version of Go Fish called Twisted Fish, and the Readers Digest National Word Power Challenge.

In 2007, their sales topped \$540,000, and McNeill said they expect to hit \$1.5 million this year.

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"It is a very business-friendly state," Uniacke said. "We saw that [small business promotion group] First State Innovation got help from Joe Biden, Tom Carper, Mike Castle. Certainly, there's a great show of faith that they want to help the little guy grow into a big guy."

That friendly atmosphere has given McNeill a desire to grow and become a large company.

"In five years I would like to be a major Delaware player," he said. "I believe we could be a billion-dollar player."

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